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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 005385

SIPDIS

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TREASURY FOR OASIA
DEPT PLEASE PASS USTR FOR LERRION
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SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ETRD EAGR KIPR PREL TU
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR PRESSES TRADE MINISTER ON IPR

Ref: STATE 180202

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY.

¶1. (U) This cable contains an action request. See para
¶9.

Summary

¶12. (SBU) In a September 17 meeting with State Minister Kursad Tuzmen, the Ambassador raised intellectual property rights, barriers to importing distilled spirits and rice (septel), scheduling a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) meeting and trucker security in Iraq (septel). Tuzmen raised Turkish automaker Tofas' desire to purchase a General Motors powertrain assembly line with the aim of exporting powertrains to Iran. End Summary.

IPR

¶13. (U) The Ambassador noted that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the Turkish Ministry of Justice had jointly organized a successful conference on IPR enforcement the previous week. He urged that Turkish companies, particularly apparel firms for which trademarks/brand recognition are increasingly important in Turkey and abroad, see IPR protection as a priority.

¶14. (SBU) The Ambassador raised lack of data exclusivity protection for pharmaceutical companies as an area in which Turkey is not carrying out its WTO TRIPS obligations. This was the leading U.S. concern motivating a decision to elevate Turkey to Priority Watch List status in this year's Special 301 process. The Ambassador added that lack of data exclusivity, along with other problems facing research-based companies, could force those firms to choose not to release innovative drugs in Turkey, with a major impact on health care.

¶15. (SBU) Tuzmen responded that the Special 301 decision was unjustified, and that Turkey applied strong standards in IPR.

Regional Trade

¶16. (SBU) Tuzmen noted Turkey's interest in expanding trade with neighboring countries, and in this connection raised Turkish automaker Tofas' desire to purchase a General Motors powertrain assembly line with the aim of exporting powertrains to Iran.

¶17. (SBU) The Ambassador responded that we understand Turkey's desire to export more to neighboring countries, and that, with respect to Iraq, we fully support Turkey's aspirations. He noted that with regard to Syria and Iran, the situation was more complex. The U.S. had concerns about the policies pursued by both countries and U.S. sanctions on Syria and Iran were in place as the Minister was well aware. The Ambassador stated that the Embassy would check the status of GM's application to the U.S. Treasury for permission to sell the equipment to TOFAS, and provide an update to the Foreign Trade Undersecretariat.

TIFA

¶18. (U) The Ambassador told Tuzmen that we view the TIFA as a useful vehicle for discussing these and other trade and investment issues with Turkey, and noted that the Foreign Trade Undersecretary (FTU) had not made a concrete counterproposal to our proposed date in October. Tuzmen responded that FTU Kayalar's calendar

is packed for the next several months, and suggested
that a TIFA could be held sometime in January or
February 2005.

19. (U) Action Request: Please advise current status of
GM's application to Treasury on the TOFAS case.
Edelman